

FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW
April 7, 2019



COREY CONNERS (-20)

DOUG MILNE: Like to welcome the winner of the 2019 Valero Texas Open, Corey Conners.

Corey, congratulations on your first career PGA TOUR title. So many story lines that we could start off with. With the win, you move to No. 13 in the FedExCup standings, of course all the things that come with it, the two-year exemption to the PGA TOUR, the entries into the number of events that I won't even get into just yet. With all that said, just a few comments on finally cracking that victory seal.

COREY CONNERS: Wow, it feels amazing. I've been close many times or a few times over the last year and a little bit. I feel like I've learned a lot in those situations and that really helped me today. Couldn't be more excited to kind of get over the edge and get the job done. There's so many perks that come with it and I feel like I handled myself really well out there, stayed relaxed and stuck to the process and look forward to doing this a few more times.

DOUG MILNE: I'm sure the questions will come up, but today's round, quite the roller coaster ride. If you could just kind of take us through the highs and lows and how you kind of maintained your perseverance?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, got off to a great start. Birdied No. 5 to go 4 under on the first five. Was walking to 6 tee thinking, wow, this is pretty awesome. Then reeled off four straight bogeys. Those holes were playing a little trickier back into the wind. Yeah, missed some iron shots and was able to regroup going from 9 to 10 and just told myself to stay patient, trust my game. Knew I was hitting good shots. Nos. 10, 11 were downwind, so I tried to be really focused and hit some good shots in there. Was able to hit a couple nice wedges, make birdies. A bit of a bonus birdie on 12.

At that point I thought like, we're going to do this, just keep your foot on the pedal. Yeah, it was quite a round. The last few holes are a bit of a blur at the moment.

DOUG MILNE: And my final question and then we'll open it up for questions, Canada very well represented out there today. You had a number of your fellow Canadians on Tour out there rooting you on. How special is that for you to have seen and how special can you imagine it is in Canada?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, I've got a great group of friends. They're Canadians out here and there's a lot of Canada cheers from the crowd. Really good friends with Mackenzie Hughes and Nick Taylor. It was awesome to see them by the 18th green. They've been

really helpful in guiding me and spend a lot of time with them week in and week out in practice rounds and dinner. They definitely help keep me loose and I think we all motivate each other.

Canadian fans are awesome. I'm sure there's a lot of happy fans back home in Listowel, Ontario, and all across Canada. It's really exciting.

DOUG MILNE: With that, we'll open it up.

Q. Corey, I know it's only 45 minutes old, but any time at all to digest the fact that you're a Monday qualifier, you win this tournament and you're about to catch a flight to Augusta National?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, it's gone by pretty quick. I don't think it's sunk in. Yeah, really exciting. It just doesn't seem real. It's pretty amazing.

Q. Well, you looked pretty unflappable all day long, but during that four-bogey streak, what were your insides like? What was going through your head?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, I didn't get too down on myself. Like I said before, I knew I was playing really well and just it was nice to have a little break between 9 and 10 and give myself a bit of a pep talk and just relax. Yeah, I just got myself in some tricky spots and wasn't able to save par on those four holes.

Yeah, I knew I was going to make some more birdies throughout the day, so I didn't count myself out and just tried to stick with it and be aggressive and turn it around and was able do that.

Q. I was standing off the 18th green, your wife was over to our right. She was very nervous, wasn't quite sure when to approach the green after you putted out. Then she was a little hesitant going up there. When she finally did she ran, jumped on you, you guys embraced. Do you remember that moment, because I know it's probably kind of a blur to an extent, but just her charging you, jumping, hugging, just what that means to you and your wife?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, that was an amazing moment. I'm so lucky to be able to share this journey with her. She's there every step of the way and she's my biggest fan. It's amazing, kind of something that we've dreamt of. I think the first thing she said is, "Is this real?" I said, "Yeah, it's real, we did it." Yeah, it's amazing to have her supporting me and it was a special moment and I'm really happy that she was able to share it with me.

Q. You were down the stretch with Charley Hoffman, who owns this course, a veteran; Ryan Moore, another veteran. Did you find yourself scoreboard watching at all?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, I didn't really try to, but I accidentally looked on 14, I just saw the leaderboard. I saw that something just hopped up that I think Moore and myself were tied for the lead. I just had a short birdie putt remaining, so I knew I was going to step one shot ahead. But yeah, it was pretty tight. Just tried to stay focused and hit some more good shots coming in.

Q. Among all the birdies on the back side, how huge, how clutch was that par save on the 15th that snuck in there? It was still pretty tight then.

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, that came to my mind after answering the last question. That was a big save. I think probably a turning point for me to keep my lead, I guess. Yeah, that was big. I was cheering for the ball to stay up the whole way as it was going towards the hole. I hit a good putt, just broke a little bit more than I was expecting. I played the last three holes really well, so I was really trying to make that so I could attack the last few.

Q. And have you seen a video replay yet of your wife's reaction to that putt?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, just with Sky Sports, they showed me. Yeah, I know her emotions are pretty crazy. She was cheering hard for me. It was awesome to see.

Q. Other than the fact that you're going back to Augusta, what do you remember from last time, I guess it was 2015, and what do you want to do again?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, I felt like I was playing really well, just had a poor first round. Hit some good shots, just kind of got exposed a little bit. I know the course really well, I played a lot of rounds preparing for that event. So I haven't really thought too much about it, but really excited to get back there. It's a place I think I can play really well. Pretty comfortable turning the ball right to left and that's, I think, pretty important out there, the predominant shot shape that you need.

Q. Do you know yet when you're going to get there?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, the lovely people at Valero are saving a spot for me on the plane heading there this evening. Big change of plans.

It's funny, we were in the hotel room here this morning and my wife got the email to check in for our flight home tomorrow morning. I was like, "Don't check in for that quite yet. I've got different plans."

Q. What were your plans for the u coming week?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, we had planned to fly back to Palm Beach Gardens and just relax. My wife's going to Iceland for a friend's wedding the week after the Masters, so we were just going to spend some time relaxing there. I've got a few more events on the schedule after the Masters, so yeah, it was just going to be an off week, but I'm glad it's not.

Q. Corey, how do you think you'll spend Mondays now?

COREY CONNERS: I will not be playing in Monday qualifiers, which is pretty awesome. It's been an interesting experience this year. I'm not sure exactly, I think that will probably be more of a travel day, but yeah, I will not have as much stress. I won't be feeling as much pressure on Mondays, I'm sure.

Q. And I mean going through Web.com, going through Finals, getting your card, doing Mondays, now you are two and a half years of just you have your own schedule. What is that feeling like and the journey to come to this moment?

COREY CONNERS: It's been amazing, something that I've dreamt of. It's happened pretty quickly. Spent just one year on the Web.com Tour, got my Tour card through the Finals. Yeah, I had a lot of confidence in my game each step of the way and I've continued to get better and good things have continued to happen. It's an amazing feeling and really fortunate to be in this position and super excited to be able to call myself a winner.

It's also my first professional victory ever in any event, so I didn't really play a lot of mini-tour golf. I started my professional career on the Mackenzie Tour and PGA TOUR Latinoamerica for one year. Didn't have any wins on there and didn't have any wins on the Web.com Tour, so this is it.

Q. When was your last win then?

COREY CONNERS: I guess it would be in an amateur event. Won, I think, seven college events. I won an amateur event in Australia after I graduated just kind of coming up before the Masters. That was probably in 2015, a while ago.

DOUG MILNE: Before we let you go, I'm going to go out on a limb and ask you to take your phone out and give us the number of text messages. I've heard it going off. What's the number?

COREY CONNERS: We've got 90.

DOUG MILNE: Ninety and counting.

COREY CONNERS: I have 15 missed calls and it's still going, yeah.

DOUG MILNE: That's fantastic. Well, Corey, congratulations on your first win here at the 2019 Valero Texas Open.

COREY CONNERS: Thank you.